

those in all the ages who care to remember those who care and sacrifice for others.

CENTENNIAL FOUNDING OF THE ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA SORORITY, INC.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, this evening I rise to commemorate the centennial of the founding of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., the first Greek-letter organization established by black college women in America. This prestigious organization, founded at Howard University by nine visionary women in 1908, at a period when Jim Crow laws flourished in the law books, knew the rigors of their journey during the early 1900s. The organization, which has grown to 200,000 members in 975 chapters worldwide, includes an extraordinary collection of women, who now encompass diverse ethnicities and nationalities and are united by a bond of sisterhood and a commitment to service.

As a member of the Alpha Kappa Omega Graduate Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority in Houston, Texas, I am proud to honor this historic milestone and welcome my sorors to the birthplace of Alpha Kappa Alpha at Howard University in Washington, DC. This evening, the sorority will conclude a 4-day salute that culminated in a gala week of tributes, salutes, and praise. Today, one hundred years ago, amazing sisterhood, the passion for humanitarian service, and the campaign for education brought nine ardent women together to form Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

Alpha Kappa Alpha was founded to touch lives, improve the stature of women and serve humankind. Its mission is to develop leaders, expand Alpha Kappa Alpha's economic achievements, and ensure that the Sorority is fully engaged in achieving its possible goals. Sojourner Truth once said, that "If women want any rights more than [they've] got, why don't they just take them and not be talking about it." This quote embodies the spirit that the determined women of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. exhibit in order to attain the long-awaited goals of freedom and equality.

The sorority is "home" to college presidents, deans, directors of Fortune 500 companies, judges, mayors, Members of Congress, state legislatures, city councils, and school boards. This sorority has provided the foundation for intellectuals such as Sharon Pratt Kelly, the first woman to serve as mayor of Washington, DC, Angie Brookes, the first woman President of the United Nations, the long revered Rosa Parks, mother of the Civil Rights Movement, Azie Taylor Morton, the only African-American to hold the position of Treasurer of the United States, and First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. Alpha Kappa Alpha women have served in the United States Armed Services and devoted their lives to saving ours. I salute those women today who are active or retired military personnel. They and women such as Lt. Col. Anita McMiller, Deputy Legislative Assistant to Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff, are the heroes that should be emulated by the next generation.

AKA's have long referred to founder Ethel Hedgeman Lyle as the "guiding light," a figu-

rative phrase that insists upon one's aptitude, resilience, unwavering service, and valor. President George W. Bush, in his address at the 55th Inauguration, stated that:

Our nation relies on men and women who look after a neighbor and surround the lost with love. Americans, at our best, value the life we see in one another, and must always remember that even the unwanted have worth.

At a time when our Nation, in fact the world, has experienced unprecedented upheavals, Alpha Kappa Alpha has stayed the course of its mission and provided an anchor for scores of individuals and families by empowering communities through our committed service. A service that has endured 100 years because Barbara A. McKinzie, the Centennial International President, declares that it was built on bedrock of strength.

I am proud to stand on the floor of the House tonight and pay tribute to this extraordinary organization, which has been helping our young women find the support, courage, and passion they need to become leaders in our society.

□ 2045

OVERRIDE THE VETO OF PRESIDENT BUSH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESTAK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SESTAK. Madam Speaker, tomorrow the House will vote on whether to override the veto of President Bush on the Defense authorization bill. He vetoed this bill because, within it, it permitted a servicemember who had been tortured in the first Gulf War to not only successfully sue the Iraqi Government, but having won that case, to be able to be given what the court awarded him or her.

I am concerned and fear that tomorrow this House will vote to recommit to send that bill back to the House Armed Services Committee and to put a waiver in that bill which will permit President Bush to be able to overrule a court that has now awarded, as it has, a servicemember, having been tortured, the judgment that that court gave of Iraqi monies that are held here in the United States.

The reason for that is the Iraqi Government has threatened to pull out of the United States \$25 billion that it has invested over here. Every month we put almost \$12 billion into Iraq in addition to those that wear the cloth of this Nation.

This is a good bill in many ways, providing a pay raise of 3.5 percent that is needed for the men and women that serve our Nation, but I do not understand how this President nor how this Congress could ever permit a man or a woman who has worn the cloth of this Nation in a war to have sued successfully, having been tortured, as law permits, to now not be permitted to gain the judgment that a court has given him or her merely because the Iraqi Government, obligated under inter-

national law for anything that prior governments in Iraq or any country that another successive government has succeeded to be responsible for merely because that government has threatened to take out of this country \$25 billion.

We should vote to try to override this veto with the many good things in this bill. Many of us talk about taking care of our men and women. How can those who have not only come close to giving the ultimate sacrifice by torture, and who have continued to serve this Nation as they have come home, not be successful in being given what the court has provided them in their judgment?

AMERICAN HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. LEE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I come to the House floor tonight to talk, like I often do, a little bit about health care. And this is the first day that the Congress is back in session after the December recess. And legitimately, someone might ask is it maybe a little early to begin this type of discussion. But the reality is, since we didn't finish our work in the last year, it is entirely appropriate for us to begin this year talking about some of those same things that were left undone at the end of 2007. Specifically, the reauthorization of the State Children's Health Insurance Program. An 18-month extension was passed at the end of the last Congress. I was grateful for that. I voted in favor of that. But the reality is this Congress should do its work and reauthorize this program for the full 10 years as it was intended when the reauthorization was up last September.

We had a lot of opportunities to do this in my committee, the Committee on Energy and Commerce, but we failed to have a markup in subcommittee. We had a markup in full committee that was little more than a charade. We brought a very bad bill to the House floor in August. It was passed, but was not taken up by the Senate because the bill was so flawed.

Then we had the Senate bill come to the House floor and it was a new bill, not a conference committee report. We had ample opportunity to debate that and take it back to committee and have a subcommittee hearing and subcommittee markup, a full committee hearing and a full committee markup, but we chose not to do that. We brought that same bill to the floor and voted on it. The House passed because they have a majority on the other side, and the President vetoed it and the veto was sustained.

The same bill was brought up a second time in early October. The same result. The bill was passed, and the bill was vetoed and the veto was sustained.